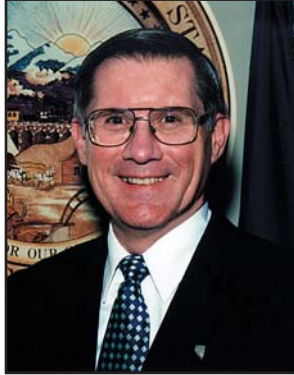


Roadway Projects Mark Progress Throughout State



The Director's Corner

**Tom Stephens, P.E.,
Director**



We at the Nevada Department of Transportation work hard to insure that Nevada's highways meet national safety standards. These standards take into account funding limitations and motorists' mobility needs. For example, we cannot afford to build every highway to interstate standards even though interstates are the safest roads. We do not set maximum speed limits at 45 mph even though 45 mph is much safer than 65 or 70 mph.

After building highways to national safety standards, we use accident history to identify hazardous locations requiring improvement. Normally, one fatal accident at a location involving driver error does not result in identification of a hazardous location on a highway that otherwise meets safety standards.

Two recent fatal crossover accidents on US 95 near Ann Road in Las Vegas have now identified that area as a hazard location. NDOT is installing a \$717,000, two-mile section of guardrail in the

median for each direction of travel in the vicinity of the Rancho curve. We expedited this construction and expect the median guardrail for the southbound direction to be installed less than 45 days after the accident.

We are also reviewing the speed limit on all of US 95 in northwest Las Vegas in light of the increased traffic, increased accidents and on-going construction. Generally speed limits are based on the speed 85% of the drivers do not exceed. Most drivers do not exceed the speed at which they feel safe. However, drivers' perceptions of safety may be too high for a road which is subject to frequent reductions of speed due to congestion.

It has been suggested NDOT does not understand the needs of Southern Nevada since we are headquartered in Carson City. However, most NDOT employees are stationed throughout the state overseeing the construction and maintenance of over 5,000 miles of state highways. More than 300 NDOT employees are stationed in Southern Nevada. Most of Nevada's highway construction funds are spent in Southern Nevada. Engineering consulting firms based in Southern Nevada do most highway designs for Southern Nevada projects. Our Carson City based engineers working on southern projects make frequent trips to Southern Nevada. We certainly understand the transportation needs generated by the phenomenal growth of Southern Nevada.

The work NDOT has done in the past 10 years in Southern Nevada is remarkable. I-515 has been extended though Henderson. I-15 has been widened south of downtown Las Vegas through the resort corridor with many major interchange improvements. US 95 widening in northwest Las Vegas is well underway. By early next year we will have widened

I-15 southbound from Las Vegas to Primm. We repaved the Strip and many other major streets. In October, ground will be broken on the first phase to put a bridge across the Colorado River at Hoover Dam. We are working with Caltrans to improve the lifeline I-15 to Los Angeles.

The men and women of NDOT recognize the needs of Nevadans throughout the state and are proud of what we are doing to improve transportation for everyone.

On the cover: Groundbreakings were celebrated at two large construction projects in Reno and Las Vegas, and a completed project was dedicated in Winnemucca. Upper left, Gov. Kenny Guinn speaks to a crowd at the groundbreaking of the Valley View and Decatur Boulevard bridges project in Las Vegas on Aug. 12. At right, ground was broken at the Reno Spaghetti Bowl rejuvenation project on Aug. 8. Sharing the jackhammer duties with the governor are Federal Highway Administrator Mary E. Peters and U.S. Sen. Harry Reid. At lower left, in Winnemucca, Chuck Giordano, chairman of the Humboldt County Commission, Gov. Guinn, Paul Vesco, mayor of Winnemucca, and NDOT Director Tom Stephens dedicate a one-mile section of Haskell Street in Winnemucca on Aug. 5.

Tom Stephens Completes Term As WASHTO Group President

Highways don't end at the state borders, and cooperation among state departments of transportation makes for a smooth and efficient



DIGNITARIES—Among the dignitaries at the WASHTO opening session in San Antonio, Texas, were William S. Sessions, former director of the FBI, NDOT Director Tom Stephens, and Gov. Rick Perry of Texas.

highway system. That cooperation is fostered in a national organization: the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, and the western division of that group, WASHTO.

NDOT Director Tom Stephens has just completed a one-year term as president of the western region, which encompasses the 11 western states, plus Alaska, Hawaii, North and South Dakota, Texas, Oklahoma and Nebraska. He



APPRECIATIVE—Tom Stephens thanks WASHTO members for their support during his term in office.

was succeeded by the Wyoming Director of Transportation, Sleeter Dover.

Stephens listed as one of his major accomplishments the cooperation with the Western Governors' Conference on the reauthorization of



CONGRATS—Wyoming Director of Transportation Sleeter Dover congratulates NDOT Director Tom Stephens on a successful term as president of WASHTO.

TEA-21, the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century. Most western states have experienced growth much higher than the national average between 1990 and 2000, and their corresponding needs for transportation funds are also higher. TEA-21 resulted in a proportional increase in highway funds to western states.

The director also mentioned as highlights during his term as WASHTO president the recent annual conference in San Antonio which provided a number of technical sessions which were valuable to state transportation officials, and the meeting of western transportation directors in Las Vegas which provided a tour of Hoover Dam and a briefing on the new bridge to be built across the Colorado River.

NDOT Deputy Director Jeff Fontaine served as WASHTO secretary-treasurer and Holli Chavez, executive assistant, coordinated and facilitated WASHTO activities.

US 95 Widening in Las Vegas Will be State's Largest Project

A groundbreaking at Valley View and Decatur Boulevard bridges on Aug. 12 marked one of the milestones in a massive



TURNOVER—Congresswoman Shelley Berkley, Gov. Kenny Guinn and State Controller Kathy Augustine turn over a few shovels of dirt marking the groundbreaking of the new bridges to be built at Valley View & Decatur on US 95 in Las Vegas.

highway construction project to keep pace with unprecedented population growth in southern Nevada.

Contractor MMC Inc. will take down and replace the two bridges to accommodate the future widening of US 95 to 10 lanes. The \$20.4 million project is scheduled to be completed in October 2003.

For years, Las Vegas has topped the charts when it comes to population growth. Clark County's population

jumped 98 percent between 1990 and 2001, from 741,000 to 1.46 million. The increase was fueled by hotel-casino growth on a massive scale and the attendant tourist-related businesses, shopping centers and housing developments.

"When the freeway system through Las Vegas was built some 30 to 40 years ago, no one ever anticipated that kind of growth," said NDOT Project Manager Genichi Kanow. "It's just phenomenal."

Kanow is overseeing the widening of US 95 in Las Vegas. Accommodating rapidly multiplying traffic volumes is just one of the struggles facing the area. The same type of infrastructure demands are faced by those providing surface streets, schools and utilities.

The challenge for the Nevada Department of

Transportation is especially great. Widening US 95 to 10 lanes between Torrey Pines Boulevard and Martin Luther King Boulevard means overpasses, built for only six lanes to pass beneath, must be

torn down and rebuilt.

The overall project is so large it has to be split into five sections. When all of the pieces come together in late 2006 or early



2007, the US 95 freeway-widening project through Las Vegas will be the largest freeway construction project in the state, estimated at \$400 million.

The good news is that work is proceeding on several fronts. The Torrey Pines overpass has already been rebuilt, and each section of



TALKING FREEWAYS—Jim Caviola of Parsons Corp., NDOT District I Assistant District Engineer for Construction Gus Michaels, NDOT project manager Gen Kanow, and NDOT District I Engineer Gene Weight discussed the upcoming widening project at the groundbreaking.



DIGNITARIES—Various government and project officials mark the ceremonial start of the bridge widening at Valley View and Decatur.

the giant project is in at least the design phase. Other sections are nearing completion.

Project 1: Widening of a section of US 95 paralleling Rainbow Boulevard north to Craig Road is essentially complete.

Project 2: The Torrey Pines bridge reconstruction was recently completed. It was taken down and rebuilt in preparation for widening of the freeway. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists was maintained throughout construction. The demolition and reconstruction of the overpasses at

Valley View and Decatur boulevards is expected to take 350 working days, or about 14 months.

Another portion of Project 2 is northbound lane widening on US 95 near Summerlin Parkway. The project is estimated to cost \$15 million, and is expected to go out to bid in August.

The final portion of Project 2 will be a modification of the Rainbow interchange to the Summerlin Parkway connectors. It will be put out to bid the first quarter of 2003 and is expected to cost \$60 million.

The timetable for projects 3, 4 and 5 are dependent on acquisition of right-of-way and utility relocation.

Project 3: The Rancho Drive interchange will be replaced and westbound ramps will be added to Martin Luther King Boulevard. US 95 will be

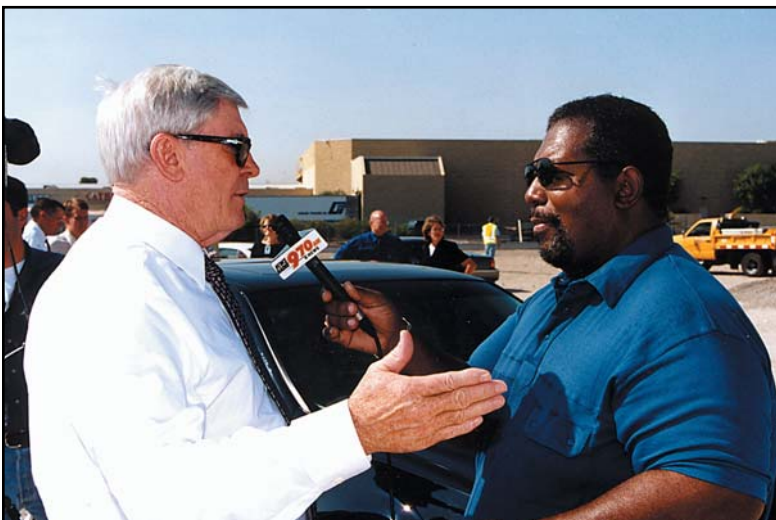
Highlights of the US 95 widening in Las Vegas:

- Project will be the most expensive highway project in Nevada, estimated at \$400 million.
- Aesthetic treatments of landscape and design will be incorporated in the projects once a corridor study is completed.
- Sound walls will be installed where the projects adjoin residential areas.
- As part of the widening project, high-occupancy vehicle lanes will be dedicated to van pools, car pools, buses and passenger cars with two or more occupants.

widened to 10 lanes. Right of way acquisition is in progress, and the project is expected to cost \$81 million, with the project going out to bid in spring of next year.

Project 4: Finish Decatur and Valley View interchanges. Replace Jones Boulevard interchange and widen US 95 to 10 lanes. It is expected to go out to bid in October of next year, with an estimated cost of \$66 million.

Project 5: Reconstruction of the Rainbow/Summerlin interchange and widening of US 95 to 10 lanes. It is estimated to cost \$40 million and expected to go out to bid in October of next year.



MEDIA TIME—Gov. Kenny Guinn discusses the Las Vegas widening project with radio reporter Big Mack McPhaul of KNEWS.

Aesthetics and Landscape Program Secures Funding from NDOT Board

With increased competition for tourism, putting the best face on the Silver State is becoming more important than ever. At its June meeting, the State Transportation Board of Directors voted to make aesthetic considerations part of future highway projects.

Board members voted to spend three percent of the construction and capacity project budgets on landscape and aesthetic treatments. Beginning in October, NDOT will make \$2 million per year available for two years to accelerate corridor landscape planning and complete as many corridor plans as possible.

In 2004, NDOT will contribute \$500,000 per year to complete the remaining corridor plans. It is expected that all corridor plans will be completed by September 2007.

The Transportation Board also endorsed the final report by the Landscape and Aesthetics Advisory

Committee, made up of dozens of representatives from regional transportation commissions, conservation groups, state and local agencies, NDOT and citizen groups.

Aesthetic considerations have been part of NDOT planning at least since 1968, when the department officially introduced the idea in its Aesthetics Manual. But the importance of making transportation projects blend with the environment was restated in the committee's report, entitled "Pattern and Palette of Place: A Landscape and Aesthetics Master Plan for the Nevada State Highway System."

According to the report, "Landscape and aesthetics projects have a positive influence on Nevada's tourist-based economy.

They improve the visual quality of our highways and the driving

experience of our visitors.

Highway landscape and aesthetics projects can improve safety by reducing glare, separating oncoming traffic, improving wayfinding, and providing predictable yet engaging driving environments. Landscape and aesthetics master planning can enhance environmental health by accommodating wildlife, reducing erosion and runoff, and protecting native plant communities."

The landscape committee was established in 2000 by the board to address what aesthetic enhancements might be appropriate in five focus areas: urban freeways, rural highways, city streets, open space, and rest areas and maintenance facilities.

The board appointed Attorney General Frankie Sue Del Papa to work with NDOT staff and the advisory committee.



A LOT TO WORK WITH—Nevada's highways will complement the state's scenic beauty. The State Transportation Board has made a strong commitment to landscape and aesthetics as integral elements of the state's highways. This scene is SR 159, Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area.

“Rather than seeking approval for a massive public works project, the master plan establishes an organic process in which public and private interests are weighed, regional and local concerns are heard and heeded, and cost, life-cycle, and ultimate economic benefit are considered,” Del Papa said.

“Whether to elevate the experience of tourism in our state, or simply to enhance the visual quality of our daily lives, highways that incorporate landscape and aesthetic treatments make a powerful statement: We value excellence, we love this place, and we want you, our guests, to see this and tell others about it.”

In addition to input from committee members, NDOT conducted meetings throughout the state to receive comment from the public. Don Payne of NDOT oversaw the development of the report, and much of the work was performed by the University of Nevada, Reno and Las Vegas. UNR staffers worked on the ecological research, determining the best type of native and drought-tolerant vegetation, and UNLV developed recommendations for new policies, procedures and standards.

As part of its work, the landscape committee established highway corridors for all of the state’s major roadways. The corridor segments are based on the character of its landscape, whether it is urban or rural; the type of landforms and plant communities; and cultural or historical regions.

Corridor planning allows NDOT, local governments and the public to suggest major design

themes, types of aesthetic treatment, budgets and priorities.

After a corridor plan is developed and endorsed by local governments and NDOT, the plan

“Highways that incorporate landscape and aesthetic treatments make a powerful statement: ‘We value excellence, we love this place, and we want you, our guests, to see this and tell others about it.’”

becomes the guide for landscape and aesthetics on individual project designs within the corridor.

In the future, any entity proposing a construction project within an NDOT right-of-way must

conform to the corridor plan.

Communities will work with NDOT and other resource agencies to decide what will be built, what it will look like, and what plants and materials will be used.

Part of the money NDOT is committing to aesthetics will go into a community matching grant program for retrofitting existing highways with landscape and aesthetic treatments.

Before proceeding to the project design phase, NDOT will verify local government endorsement and funding commitment to the enhancements specified in the corridor plan. By the end of the project design, funding and maintenance agreements will be in place. The entire landscape and aesthetics master plan can be reviewed at the NDOT website. Go to: www.nevadadot.com/pub_involvement/landscape/unlv/landscape.



ALL AYES—Gov. Kenny Guinn, Atty. Gen. Frankie Sue Del Papa and transportation board member Cesar Caviglia were three of the unanimous votes in favor of the Landscape and Aesthetics Master Plan. NDOT Director Tom Stephens is ready to answer questions at the board meeting.

Icon from the '50s:

“Fabulous” Las Vegas Sign Still Welcomes Tourists and Gains New Life via License Plate, Postage Stamp

On its way to creating bigger and better resorts, Las Vegas gleefully blows up its landmarks (including, literally, the Landmark Hotel on Nov. 7, 1995; as well as the Dunes and Sands Hotels). But one thing has remained constant since 1956: a hand-lettered sign welcoming visitors to “fabulous” Las Vegas.

The sign graces the south end of what most news media refer to as “the glittering Las Vegas Strip,” but what is known as State Route 604 at the Nevada Department of Transportation. The sign has been moved several times, each jump trying to stay ahead of development.

Over the years, the sign has welcomed millions of visitors, though the number has dropped off considerably since NDOT completed I-15 south of Tropicana Avenue in 1966. But the welcome sign remains an icon, an instantly recognized symbol of Las Vegas, where the only constant is change.

In the never-ending battle to top itself, the arms race for the best and most exciting resort takes shape in LED extravaganzas along the Las

Vegas Strip: highlight reels of superstars and pyrotechnics that tout the attractions within. Blazing brightly day and night, none of the billboard-sized animations is a match for what Betty Willis created on a drafting table for Western Neon almost two generations ago.

That the 20-foot wide sign has endured and even gained new fame in recent months surprises Willis, a lifelong Las Vegas resident, as much as anyone else. “I thought it would be up the normal life span, 10 years or so,” Willis said. “I never thought it would be this famous in a million years.”

Last year, the “Welcome to Las Vegas” sign was incorporated into a new license plate design. The limited-edition plates cost \$61, and \$25 of that will go to the City of Las Vegas for historic preservation efforts. Possible uses for the money include refurbishing the downtown post office, built in 1931, and perhaps turning it into



Millions have been greeted by the now famous sign since 1956. The sign is located on NDOT right-of-way.

a museum. City officials are also considering developing a curriculum for school children on Las Vegas's past, and placing historic trail markers.

As part of a 50-state series of stamps, the postal service unveiled the "Greetings From Nevada" stamp in April. It contains an image of the welcome sign and the neon horse from the Hacienda Hotel. The horse has been refurbished and stands tall in the middle of Las Vegas Boulevard near the downtown Fremont Street Experience.

Seen in television shows, films and magazines, the welcome sign has definitely had a life of its own. Willis was interviewed for a BBC program by a Scottish correspondent who never forgot the sign he saw when he was 8 years old.

Clearly, the now "retro" look of the sign caught on with the public and never let go. Though the public is enamored with the sign, Willis said, "There are lots of things I would like to improve. The lettering was hand done, and now you can do lettering beautifully on the computer. We didn't have anywhere near the number of fonts we have today, and if you did a line of lettering a quarter-inch too long, you had to do it over."

The welcome sign is the one that endured, but Willis had a hand in most of the motel and smaller signs along the Strip in the 1950s. Willis also worked on signs for the Moulin Rouge and the Blue Angel, one of a few of her signs still standing. For all the fame of the welcome sign, however, the designer receives nothing for its use. "I decided a long time ago that if it helped Las Vegas, it was good for all of us," she said.

Willis had a full career, assisting Jack DuBoise and Chuck Bernard, who did most of the larger signs on the Strip. Her career branched out to engineering and estimating. "I also answered the phone, and trained secretaries and bookkeepers," Willis said. "I was a handy person to have around."

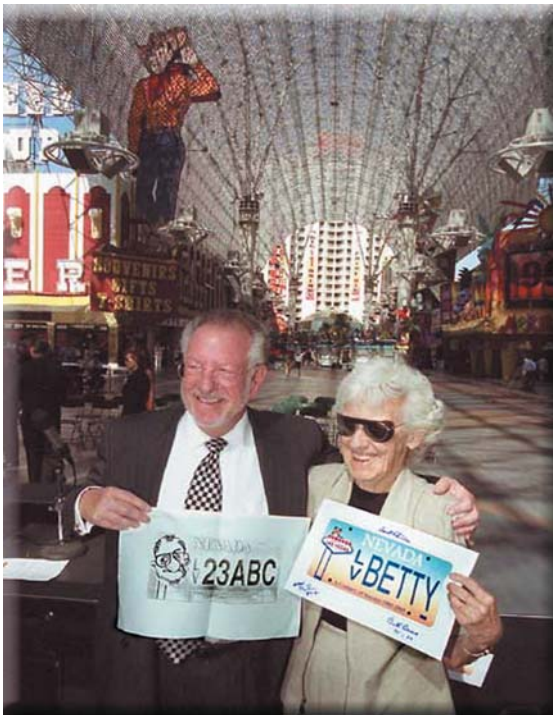
Willis is still good to have around. She works at her daughter's graphics company, designing T-shirts and doing whatever is required.

Now heading toward her eighth decade, Willis turned out to be honored for the Las Vegas license plate, but doesn't plan to make any more public appearances. "All my friends have seen me on TV and in the newspaper; they don't need to see me anymore. I'm getting old."

As she looks back at a fulfilling career that created more fame than she expected, Willis sums it all up in three words: "It's been fun."



The "Greetings from Nevada" postage stamp contains the image of the welcome sign.



AND THE WINNER IS . . . Betty Willis, whose "fabulous" sign has welcomed millions of visitors to Las Vegas. Her world-famous sign was chosen for a new license plate that will support historic preservation efforts. Mayor Oscar Goodman shares a laugh with Willis as he displays his own tongue-in-cheek design. (Photo courtesy of Gary Thompson, Las Vegas Review - Journal)

Rebuilding Begins on Reno's Spaghetti Bowl

A maximum amount of work with a minimum amount of delay for the motoring public is the goal of the three-year, \$53 million Reno Spaghetti Bowl rejuvenation project.

A formal groundbreaking event was conducted on Aug. 8, with Gov. Kenny Guinn stating: "The Reno Spaghetti Bowl serves as an economic lifeline to northern Nevada and neighboring states. The dollars allocated for this project signify its magnitude and importance to the entire western region."

Other key dignitaries who spoke at the ceremony included U.S. Sen. Harry Reid, Federal Highway Administrator Mary E. Peters, and Washoe County Regional Transportation

Commissioner John Mayer.

US 395 and I-80 in central Reno is northern Nevada's busiest highway interchange. The rejuvenation project will be the first time the interchange has undergone major improvement work since it opened in 1974.

"The tremendous growth rate in northern Nevada—35 percent in the last decade alone—has overrun the Spaghetti Bowl's capacity," said NDOT Director Tom Stephens. "A great deal of wear and tear has contributed to the deterioration of pavement and bridges," Stephens said, noting that it has been 30 years since the interchange was constructed. "This project will improve the traffic flow, replace the pavement, and renovate the bridges."



PROJECTING—Gov. Kenny Guinn talks about the improvements in store for motorists when the Reno Spaghetti Bowl project is completed.

Currently, more than 233,000 vehicles use the Reno Spaghetti Bowl every day. This includes local and tourist traffic as well as the transporters of goods and services to the west coast. By the time the project is completed in 2005, it is expected a quarter-million vehicles will use the interchange daily.

The project is the largest highway improvement contract NDOT has ever awarded in northern Nevada. Frehner Construction Company, Inc., of Las Vegas is the contractor and the Louis Berger Group provided engineering and design services. A project timeline and alternate routes can be found at renospaghettibowl.com.

While there will be closures of off-ramps and lanes at times during



GROUNDBREAKING—U. S. Sen. Harry Reid, speaking, was instrumental in obtaining a \$10 million appropriation from Congress for reconstructing the Reno Spaghetti Bowl. To the right of Sen. Reid are Gov. Kenny Guinn and Federal Highway Administrator Mary Peters.

the life of the project, work will be done at night wherever possible. Upon completion of the project, motorists will see dramatic improvements. Whether heading north, south, east or west, lane additions and ramp modifications will make the trip go more smoothly.

The project will end the challenge of maneuvering between on ramps and off ramps in close proximity. As an example, drivers heading west on I-80 from Sparks destined for US 395 will no longer have to navigate through traffic entering from the East Fourth Street interchange. Instead, the Fourth Street ramp will be relocated, and a modified ramp, expanded to two lanes, will easily take motorists north on US 395, where a roadway widened to three lanes will take them to the north valleys. Longer acceleration and deceleration lanes will be constructed throughout the project to ease driving.

US 395 will be widened to three lanes for northbound traffic from the I-80 overpass to the North McCarran Boulevard exit ramp and on the southbound side from Oddie Boulevard to I-80.

Motorists who have to contend with rush hour congestion on US 395 south of I-80 will be pleased to know that the on ramp from I-80 will be changed to two lanes for most of its length, and US 395 (I-580) will be restriped to add one lane heading south from the bridge over Kietzke Lane to Mill Street. As the population increases north of Reno, reducing congestion on US 395 is a priority.

Improvements are also in store for those traveling north on US 395/I-580 to I-80 east and

west. Ramp improvements and lane modifications will ease the transition. For example, the loop ramp to I-80 westbound will be widened to two lanes.

“We’re looking at significant capacity improvements throughout the interchange,” project manager Jim Gallegos said. “In addition to the roadway and ramp

The project manager said every effort would be made to keep traffic flowing smoothly through construction zones. The speed limit will be 50 mph.

“The construction will be done in stages, and signs for detours will be in place when ramps are closed,” Gallegos said. The East Fourth Street onramp to westbound



NATIONAL AND STATE—Dignitaries from federal and state offices converged at the groundbreaking of Reno’s new Spaghetti Bowl. From left are: NDOT Director Tom Stephens; Nevada State Transportation Board member Frankie Sue Del Papa; Gov. Kenny Guinn; Art Hamilton, FHWA Associate Administrator, Federal Lands Highway Program; Oregon DOT Director Bruce Warner; FHWA Administrator Mary Peters, Oregon DOT Federal Affairs Analyst Jason Tell, and FHWA Division Administrator John Price.

improvements, motorists will see improved signs and lighting, retaining walls, sound walls adjacent to residential areas, new pavement, and bridge repairs.

There will also be improved drainage and new landscaping, and we’ll also be working on improvements that won’t be as noticeable, such as seismic retrofit of bridges.”

The entire project is expected to take 635 working days, which is approximately three calendar years.

I-80 may be closed for a year, with drivers using Rock or Oddie Boulevard onramps instead. Other ramps will be closed, but for a shorter duration. No two consecutive on ramps or off ramps will be closed at the same time.

“Two lanes of traffic will be maintained on I-80, I-580 and US 395,” Gallegos said. “If we have closures on any of these lanes, they will be on weekends and at night. We’ll be sure to keep lanes open during rush hours.”

NDOT Night Maintenance Crews Bring Projects to Life in Las Vegas

When the sun goes down in Las Vegas, the pace of road construction and maintenance heats up. On a mid-July evening,

would drop to the 80s by the end of the shift. Installing the pavement marking is a hot job in itself. The new pavement marking is cut

beginning at 8:30 p.m. is a mixed bag. The crews have Friday nights off, lessening the risk of drunken drivers careening through a construction zone. But working nights means a disruption to family life and sleep patterns.

“You’re away from your family at night,” crew member Lawrence Gordon said. “When I get off from work I have to get the kids ready for school, maybe pay some bills, then take a nap. Then I pick up the kids and take another nap before work.”

What are the good things about working at night? “You get to see some beautiful sunrises and you’re awake for three or four hours early in the morning when it’s not so hot,” Gordon said. He also said there is a camaraderie that comes with working at night and crew members who look out for each other’s safety.



Highway Equipment Mechanic II Jack Matthews drills out a rivet for a portable sign so a new strap can be attached.

wherever you traveled in the Las Vegas Valley, you would find NDOT maintenance crews on the job, not to mention department employees at an extensive overlay project on the Boulder Highway.

Over on the western side of Las Vegas, Crew 142 put down a rolled thermoplastic pavement-marking product designed to be more reflective and last longer than traffic paint. After the material is applied, the white crosswalks at Charleston Boulevard and Durango Drive are brilliant against the black asphalt.

Even though they worked at night, the temperature is 100 degrees when they started, and

from a roll to precisely match the old marking. The old material is heated with a propane torch to 250 degrees, and the new marking is laid down. The new material is also heated with a torch until it bonds tightly with the old.

Working four 10-hour shifts



PAVING BOULDER—One of the major road construction projects in the Las Vegas Valley is the re-paving of the Boulder Highway from Tropicana Avenue to Sunset Road. The \$9.1 million project is being completed by Frehner Construction Co. NDOT employees are also on the job for quality control.

For Jason Orth, “The hardest parts about working nights are that it’s tough to see your family. Eating and sleeping normally is difficult. You give up a lot when you work nights.”

With the amount of traffic in the Las Vegas Valley, there really are no options. Most maintenance and construction has to be done when traffic is lightest.

Crew 142 is one of five crews NDOT had out that night.

Crew 154 starts work even later, 10:30 p.m., and swept I15 from Russell Avenue to Craig Road in both directions.

Crews 157 and 141 striped lanes on I 215 from Warm Springs to I 15, moving along at 5 mph.

Street sweepers worked all over the valley, picking up objects that could injure vehicles and motorists. Crew 159 had sweepers out on US 95 South, Nellis and Jones boulevards and Cheyenne Avenue.

But the biggest project under way in mid-July was the re-paving of the Boulder Highway. Phase

three of the project, costing \$9.1 million, is re-paving from Tropicana Avenue to Sunset Road by Frehner Construction Co. Even though the work is being done by a contractor, NDOT staff people are on site for quality assurance. Samples are taken of the pavement as it is laid down to make sure it meets specifications.

Phase three is part of a larger project, repaving of the Boulder Highway from Sahara to Sunset.

Even before the NDOT night crews have returned to District I headquarters, daytime maintenance crews are on the job. Their jobs are as varied and difficult as the night crews’. One day recently, members of three crews raked and shoveled five truckloads of asphalt on Nellis Boulevard to take care of subsidence along a wash. Other work:

- Landscape crews checked irrigation in the hot weather



FLAME ON—Vince Ruiz uses a torch to make the thermoplastic material lie down and bond with the old layer beneath.

to make sure plants got enough water,

- Crews took care of routine sign maintenance, traveling as far as Pahrump,
- A crew striped lanes in the Overton area,
- Other crews picked up debris and trash and performed traffic control for other crews, road shoulders were shaped, ditches were cleaned, lanes were swept, roads were patched and culverts were cleaned.

All part of a day’s (and night’s) work on the highways of Las Vegas.



Jason Orth of Maintenance Crew 142 applies a new strap to portable sign. The sign is essential to Maintenance Crew 142’s operations and has to be fixed before the crew can go to work.

Elko Area Chip Sealing Project Keeps US 93 in Tip-Top Shape

It was a picture-perfect Nevada day: brilliant white sun in an electric-blue sky. A few puffy clouds



CONVOY—Pilot car drivers are constantly on the radio, letting the equipment operators know where they are and how much room will be needed to pass safely.

Salmon Falls Creek was running strong alongside US 93 in a remote section of northern Nevada the first week of June.



PRECISION WORK—Harlan Peete keeps a precise line and speed as he drives the Flaherty chip spreader.

The wet chips were loaded into a dump truck, and the dampness minimized the dust on the project.

The project went smoothly. The chips bonded well with the coat of oil. After the rock chips were pressed into the roadway with pneumatic rollers and the trucks backing behind the Flaherty chip spreader, sweepers came behind and swept off the loose stones.

“We’re getting less than 20 pounds per square yard of chips,” said Maintenance Supervisor II Johnny Mays. “Usually with half-inch chips you get about 25 pounds per square yard.”

The oiling truck has to be closely followed by the chip spreader, rollers and sweepers. It’s a tightly

complemented snow-capped mountains. Recent spring rain brought out the flowers: purple desert lupine and flowering wild onions, white desert buckwheat and yampah, yellow rabbit brush and mule’s ears.

The late spring rain was also helping NDOT’s chip seal project on 14 miles of roadway south of the department’s maintenance station at Contact.

NDOT maintenance worker Goldie Green ran a loader, turning rock chips in the pile so the dark, wet chips from beneath came to the

coordinated parade, and each crewmember has to keep his or her mind on the job they are doing, as well as keep an eye out for safety.

To minimize traffic delays, the maintenance crews worked on sections of no more than two miles.

A constant stream of radio chatter alerted everyone as to where the NDOT pilot truck was and the size of vehicles coming through the one lane traffic control.

A giant tank for a mine was on its way (“It’s a lane-and-a-half,” according to the flagger), and the oiling truck operator was told to pull over to make way for the “lowboy” trailer.

“We always let people know where the pilot car is,” Mays said. We don’t want anyone running into each other.”

Equipment operators called out their position, and where they were

in relation to guardrails, so the pilot car driver could say how much room is needed for the big loads following. The NDOT pilot truck guides traffic past machinery that is idled. “We stop work every time traffic goes by. If we get a gust of wind, oil from the Bear Cat oil spreader will spray on the cars.”

The workers’ attention to quality and safety may be lost on the traveling public as they roll by the job sites.



GETTING THE JOB DONE—US 93 will be in better shape for years to come because of the work done along 14 miles of roadway from Contact toward Wells.



IN THE CHIPS—Goldie Green turns the chip pile to uncover the darker, wetter rocks beneath. Working with damp chips cuts down on dust and helps fellow workers and motorists.

“People gawk at us, wondering what we are doing,” said Mays.

What Mays and the NDOT crewmembers were doing was an excellent job.

The stretch of road Mays and the 30 NDOT maintenance workers worked on will stay in good condition an extra five or six years because of the chip seal. It’s a cooperative project that brings together crews 331 from Ruby Valley and Currant, 332 and 385 from Wells, crew 336 from Wendover, and 322 from Contact.

Travel from the outlying areas makes for a long day. Mays, stationed in Elko, has a 300-mile round trip to the job site. “The cell phone is a godsend,” he said. “It lets me take care of business on the road.”

While US 93 seems to be in good shape between Wells and the Idaho border, chip sealing projects are designed to keep the road in prime condition. Keeping up with maintenance is much cheaper than rebuilding a road that has deteriorated.

Chip sealing is not the only attention US 93 has received lately. Traffic engineers determined that requiring headlights to be on around the clock would help prevent head-on collisions, and three months ago maintenance crews installed the “headlights mandatory” signs from the Idaho border to the intersection of US 93 and US 93A.

“The Highway Patrol is enforcing it. There’s fewer and fewer people with their lights off during the day,” Mays said.



FORESIGHT—Dee Epps looks ahead at the oil spreader to check there are no plugged jets, called “spivies.” He also watches for plugged gates on the front of the chip spreader.



SAFETY YELLOW—NDOT highway equipment stands out vividly against the Nevada landscape. Robert O’Neal operates the roller.

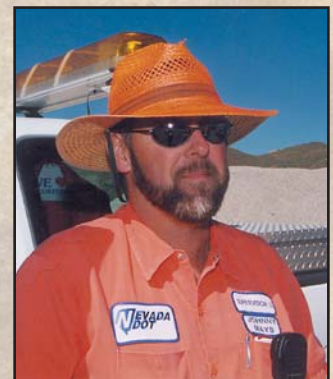
Contact Maintenance Station Links Family and History

NDOT employees working on the chip sealing project on US 93 express a great deal of pride in the work they do. For supervisor Johnny Mays and others, working on highways is like a family business. They have relatives who also worked for NDOT or its predecessor, the Highway Department. Mays’ stepfather, Doug Roberts, was a supervisor, and for 10 years, from ages 8 to 18, Mays lived at the supervisor’s house in Contact. And Mays’ step grandfather was a supervisor at the now closed Ferguson Springs Station. (Supervisor Bob Smith now lives in the Contact residence.)

Mays can point out the concrete shell of the social hall across the road from the maintenance station, and knows the wide equipment area was once Contact’s main street. When he was a boy, a store operated in the tiny town. The railroad once stopped near Contact to take on ore from the area’s mines. At the turn of the century, Contact had hundreds of residents, mostly miners.

Contact had a boom-and-bust period longer than many Nevada towns. Ore was discovered in the 1870s, and the last mine closed for good in 1957. During revival periods, schools, hotels, saloons and general merchandise stores operated.

But Contact was down on its heels by 1926, with almost the only retail establishment a general store. During Prohibition, bootlegging was said to have replaced mining as the most important activity.



THIRD GENERATION—Johnny Mays gets back to his roots at the Contact maintenance station. Mays’ stepfather and step grandfather both worked on Nevada highways, and Mays grew up at the maintenance station.

Winnemucca's Haskell Street Reconstructed

City, county and state efforts to reconstruct a one-mile section of Haskell Street in Winnemucca paid off handsomely with the dedication on August 5 of a much improved segment from Hanson Street to East Winnemucca Boulevard.

Dave Schwartz was the resident engineer on the \$2.6 million transformation, which was a cooperative effort among NDOT, Humboldt County and the City of Winnemucca. Haskell Street, which carries more than 6,000 vehicles per day, went from a two-lane road into a roadway with a median turning lane and parking on both sides of the highway. Major utility relocation and storm drain improvements were also completed as well as constructing more efficient turning movements onto East Winnemucca Boulevard and Hanson Street. The widened turning areas will be especially helpful for trucks.

A&K Earth Movers Inc. began work on March 25 and finished five weeks early.



BEFORE—
Problems with drainage are evident on Haskell Street in Winnemucca. Note also the above ground utilities.



AFTER—
The new section of Haskell Street is much more friendly to traffic now that the street has been widened and truck movement is easier. Problems with drainage have also been corrected.



Vol. 43 No. 3

NEVADA STATE TRANSPORTATION BOARD

KENNY C. GUINN, *Governor*, CHAIRMAN

LORRAINE HUNT, *Lieutenant Governor*

FRANKIE SUE DEL PAPA, *Attorney General*

KATHY AUGUSTINE, *State Controller*

JIM THORNTON

TOM GUST

FATHER CAESAR CAVIGLIA

* * *

TOM STEPHENS, P.E., *Director*

STAFF

SCOTT MAGRUDER

FRED HINNERS RICH JOHNSTON

BOB MCKENZIE

NDOT MULTIMEDIA, PUBLICATION DESIGN

STATE PRINTING OFFICE, *Printing Supervision*

NDOT News is published and distributed from the Public Information Office, NEVADA DOT Headquarters, 1263 South Stewart Street, Carson City, Nevada 89712. (775) 888-7000 or

www.nevadadot.com

Nevada Department of Transportation
1263 S. Stewart Street
Carson City, NV 89712

First-Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Carson City, NV
Permit No. 15